

Trump's Harm Even More Profound With 2nd Term: Bolton

WASHINGTON (CNBC) – The harm caused by U.S. President Donald Trump's first four years in office could be "even more profound" if he wins a second term, according to the president's former national security advisor John Bolton. Bolton served in the Trump White House for 17 months between 2018 and 2019 and left on fractious terms. He authored a book on his time in the administration which characterized the president as ignorant of basic geopolitical facts and driven solely by desire for re-election, calling Trump "erratic" and "stunningly uninformed." Bolton told CNBC on Wednesday that it became apparent during his time in the White House that Trump had no "philosophy" or "grand strategy."

Kayhan International

Pandemic Caused 'Unprecedented' Emissions Drop: Study

PARIS (AFP) – Pandemic restrictions saw an unprecedented fall in greenhouse gas emissions in the first half of 2020 – larger than during the 2008 financial crisis and even World War II – experts said Wednesday. As governments ordered lockdowns to try to crush the first wave of Covid-19, CO2 emissions from transport, power and aviation plummeted, the international team of researchers said. Using data including hourly electricity production, vehicle traffic from more than 400 cities worldwide, daily passenger flights and monthly production and consumption figures, they determined that the emissions drop was the largest in modern history.

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Viewpoint

Myanmar Regime Intensifies Persecution of Rohingya Muslims


World Cuisine Awards Iranian Signature Dish



Serbian, Iranian Wrestling Federations Sign MoU



Survey: Majority of Arabs Have Negative View of U.S.



Food for Thought on the Prophet's Passing Away

By: Seyyed Ali Shahbaz

Tomorrow, Friday the 28th of Safar is that sad day in the annals of history when the person whom the Holy Qur'an calls "Mercy unto the creation", breathed his last. To be exact, 1431 lunar years have passed since the departure from the mortal world of the Last and Greatest of the Divine Messengers, whose universal mission to mankind was foretold by all Prophets to their respective nations – Abraham in his scripture, Moses in Deuteronomy, Jesus in the Gospel according to St. John, and several others, including the sages of the Zoroastrians, the Hindus, the Buddhists, the Greeks, the Chinese, the Africans, and etc. – but the grief remains fresh till this day. Not because he allegedly left the Ummah in any state of ambiguity without naming anyone to take charge of political and spiritual affairs, or as some others allege, he hinted at an aged person who was not destined to live more than a couple of years after him.

Nay such thoughts about the Seal of Prophets are nothing but sheer blasphemy, especially in view of the fact that Prophet Muhammad (SAWA), whom God says "neither errs, nor speaks out of desire, but it is revelation that is revealed" (53:2-5), said in the most explicit words:

"I am leaving behind among you the Thaqalayn (two invaluable things); the Book of God (the Holy Qur'an) and my progeny the Ahl al-Bayt. Hold fast to them and you will never go astray, for the two will never separate from each other even when they return to me at the Fountain (of Kowthar on the Day of Judgement)."

It is crystal clear from this and several other statements that a Godsend person whom the Arabs did not elect or select as a Prophet, cannot leave the Muslims in the dark without explicitly proclaiming God Almighty's commandment regarding his Divinely-designated Heir, who ought to be as spotlessly pure as him, and not someone who before becoming Muslim had spent the greater part of life in idolatry and sins.

Thus, two months and ten days before his passing away, the Prophet had halted on God's express commandment at the pond (Ghadeer) of Khum near Juhfa, while returning from his Farewell Hajj Pilgrimage, and after a delivering a sermon in broad daylight on accomplishment of his mission, lifted his cousin, and proclaimed without mincing words:

"For whomsoever I am Master, this Ali (AS) is his Master."

Then how come the dispute regarding the Prophet's rightful successor among Muslims who have sadly splintered into sects? Why did his companions fail in fully adhering to his God-given instructions?

What made a group of Muslims to assemble at the Saqifa Bani Sa'adah to arbitrarily select a caliph after a fistfight among them, even as the body of the Prophet lay unburied amidst the profound grief of his only surviving daughter, Hazrat Fatema Zahra (SA) and her Qur'anic blessed household (33:33) – husband Imam Ali (AS), sons Imam Hasan (AS) and Imam Husain (AS) and daughters Zainab (SA) and Umm Kulthoum (SA)? Moreover, why 39 years later on the Prophet's passing away anniversary (28th Safar 50 AH), his elder grandson – hailed by him along with the younger grandson as **"Leaders of the Youth of Paradise"** – was not just treacherously martyred through poisoning by the person posing as the caliph (Mu'awiyah the hardcore heathen), but his dead body was pierced by a volley of arrows shot by a future caliph (Marwan the infidel), while the lady on a mule – who over a decade-and-a-half earlier had rode a camel to cause the first open armed dissension among Muslims – cheered those desecrating the laws of Islam?

The intention is not to open old wounds on such a doleful day. For the sake of Islamic unity, however, it is necessary to clear the mist of the past, especially since the last day of Safar, which we mark as the end of the two-month mourning period for the heartrending martyrdom of the Prophet's younger grandson Imam Husain (AS) at Karbala in 61 AH, happens to be the martyrdom in 203 AH, of another of the Prophet's Infallible Heirs (Imam Reza – AS), who was a victim of another imposter masquerading as caliph (Mamoun).

To end this brief column, the following passage from the book **"al-Muraja'at"** of the Late Lebanese Islamic scholar, Seyyed Abdul-Hussain Sharafuddin, which is actually a collection of his correspondence with Sheikh Salim al-Bishri, the Dean of Egypt's al-Azhar Academy, ought to enlighten us of the undeniable realities of the last moments of the life of Prophet Muhammad (SAWA).

Letter 86 titled **"Thursday's Calamity"** referring to a sad incident mentioned by the compilers of all **Sahihis and Sunans**, including al-Bukhari, on the authority of Ubaydullah ibn Abdullah ibn Utbah ibn Mas'ud quotes the Prophet's cousin Abdullah ibn Abbas as saying that when death approached the Messenger of Allah, his house was full of his companions and he said: **"Let me write you something that will forever protect you against straying after me."**

But a certain person (I prefer not to name him here, although Bukhari and others have mentioned his name) said: "The Prophet is under the influence of pain, and you have with you the Qur'an; so, the Book of Allah suffices us."

Those present there argued, and their argument developed into a heated dispute, with some of them saying the Prophet should write what he intends to, in order to save Muslims from going astray after him, while others repeated what that person had said. When the argument and dispute intensified in the presence of the Prophet, he scolded his companions with the words: **"Get away from me."**

This is food for thought indeed on the anniversary of the passing away of Prophet Muhammad (SAWA), who as Imam Ali (AS) says in one of his sermons in the celebrated book **"Nahj al-Balagha"**:

"When the Messenger of God passed away his head was on my chest, and his (last) breath blew over my palms and I passed it over my face. I performed his (funeral) ablution, may Allah bless him and his progeny, and the angels helped me. The house and the courtyard were full of them (angels). One party of them was descending and the other was ascending. My ears continually caught their humming voice as they invoked Allah's blessings on him, till we laid him to rest in his grave. Thus, who can have greater rights with him than I during his life or after his departure?"

Rouhani Congratulates Nation on End of 'Oppressive' Arms Ban



In this photo provided on November 5, 2018 by the Iranian Army, a Sayyad 2 missile is fired by the Talash air defense system during drills in an undisclosed location in Iran.

TEHRAN (Press TV) – Iran will be free to trade weapons as of Sunday after the United States failed in its attempts to secure an extension of the United Nations arms embargo against the Islamic Republic, President Hassan Rouhani said during a cabinet meeting on Wednesday.

Rouhani congratulated the Iranian nation on the lifting within days of the "oppressive" 10-year arms ban on the Islamic Republic despite Washington's struggles to keep the restrictions in force.

"We fought with the United States on this issue for four years. America was exerting itself to prevent this day (October 18) from coming, [but] that day is coming thanks to

our people's resistance. It is because of the endeavors of our diplomats that the U.S. failed," he said.

Rouhani also noted that the lifting of the arms embargo was a fruit of the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), for the country.

The JCPOA "removed the arms embargo and as of Sunday, we can buy weapons from and sell weapons to any [country] we want," he added.

The embargo will be lifted under UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 2231, which endorsed the JCPOA.

The administration of U.S. Presi-

dent Donald Trump tried and failed to renew the ban through an anti-Iran resolution at the Council in mid-August.

The draft was supported only by the Dominican Republic, leaving it far short of the minimum nine "yes" votes required for adoption.

The following month, Washington suffered another embarrassing loss as it failed to trigger the so-called snapback provision in the JCPOA aimed at re-imposing all UN sanctions against Iran.

The UN Security Council member states challenged the U.S.'s rationale that it was still a participant state to the nuclear accord, citing its unilateral withdrawal in May 2018.

Meanwhile, Vice-Chairman of the Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Commission Abbas Moqtadaye also said Iran will legally be free to start arms trade after UN bans are removed on Sunday without any legal impediment.

"In the years since the conclusion of JCPOA, the Islamic Republic of Iran has acted in accordance with international regulations, but a significant part of Iran's privileges and rights have not been realized by JCPOA participants states," he said.

"The United States has withdrawn from the JCPOA, and under no circumstances it can comment on issues related to Iran, including the end of arms embargo," Moqtadaye said.

He added that Iran is an independent country that has always complied with its international obligations and can now implement the actions that are allowed for it under international law.

On Monday, Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said that the UN arms sanctions against the Islamic Republic will expire at midnight October 18, terming it a "historical defeat" for the U.S.

"The arms restrictions stated in resolution 2231 will expire at 3:30 morning of October 18 (Tehran time)," Khatibzadeh told reporters in a press conference in Tehran.

He described it as a historical defeat for Washington, saying despite all its bullying, tricks and illegal measures, the U.S. has failed to

(Continued on Page 7)

'Stunning Rebuke' UN Rights Council Rejects Saudi Membership Bid

NEW YORK (Dispatches) – Saudi Arabia has failed in its bid to become a member of the United Nations Human Rights Council as China, Russia and Cuba were elected to three-year terms.

Human rights groups hailed the snub to Saudi Arabia, which deals a blow to the kingdom's attempts to improve its image in the international community.

"The #HRC elections today delivered a stunning rebuke to #SaudiArabia under Mohammed bin Salman," tweeted Bruno Stagno, a deputy executive director at Human Rights Watch, referring to the country's crown prince.

"Only country not elected, shunned by a majority of the UN. The kingdom reaped what it deserves for its serious violations of human rights and war crimes abroad," he added.

Saudi Arabia's fall from grace came two years after the killing of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, which sparked an international cry for human rights accountability in the oil-rich Persian Gulf nation.

"Unless Saudi Arabia undertakes dramatic reforms to release political prisoners, end its disastrous war in Yemen and allow its citizens meaningful political participation, it will remain a global pariah," said Sarah Leah Whitson, executive director of Democracy for the Arab World Now, which was founded by Khashoggi.

Fifteen positions were up for grabs on the 47-seat body that has been criticized by rights organizations and the U.S. for electing countries accused of human rights

(Continued on Page 7)

Armenia, Azerbaijan Continue to Trade Fire

BAKU (Dispatches) – Fighting between Azeri and Armenian forces over the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh territory is continuing despite a recent ceasefire, with the two sides repeatedly accusing each other of violating the truce.

The Armenian Ministry of Defense said in a statement on Wednesday that Azerbaijani forces had hit two Armenian military sites situated on Armenian territory. It said Armenia reserved the right to attack any military facility on Azerbaijani territory.

Azerbaijan had claimed earlier on Wednesday that it had hit two missile launch sites in Armenia that were being used as a base to target civilian areas.

The Armenian Defense Ministry rejected the claim that they were being used to target civilians.

"Those claims by the Ministry of Defense of Azerbaijan cannot

have any grounds. In fact, the military and political leadership of that country allowed itself to take aim at equipment located on the territory of the Republic of Armenia carrying out combat duty, only on the basis of assumptions," the ministry said.

Armenia and Azerbaijan reached a humanitarian ceasefire on Saturday following 11 hours of Russian-mediated talks in Moscow. The agreement, which aimed to allow an exchange of detainees and the collection of bodies from the battlefield, fell apart on Monday due to reported Armenian shelling of Azerbaijan's second-largest city of Ganja.

Azerbaijan's Foreign Ministry said the shellfire had left at least nine people dead and 33 others wounded, including children, less than 24 hours after the halt to fighting was supposed to take effect.

(Continued on Page 7)